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THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

BY
E. ALEXANDER POWELL

PUBLISHED BY THE CENTURY CO.
NEW YORK * LONDON

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INTRODUCTION.

What chiefly strikes the stranger desirous of acquainting himself with the situation that has arisen in Central Europe after the conclusion of the war is that the great political and economic units between the Baltic and the Mediterranean seas have been broken up and their places on the German-Russian frontier, as well as in the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, taken by smaller units. Whilst within the former political formations the most diverse races lived together, the result of the war was that new national formations arose. The general opinion is that the reason for this change was the freeing of oppressed peoples, and that the basis upon which the new formations were constructed was the principle of self-determination. The superficial observer accepts this, but anyone taking the trouble to study the change at close quarters, will certainly not receive the impression that liberty has succeeded bondage or prosperity stagnation. Rather will he perceive that instead of any solution having been found for the difficulties that weighed upon those great political and economic units, a shifting of established frontiers has taken place in Central Europe from the Baltic to the Mediterranean without the consent of the peoples affected

thereby, and that the military preparations necessary to the maintenance of these one-sided arrangements have brought about a state of affairs that may be described as anything rather than settled, and considered as being anything rather than the groundwork of a peaceful future. The great difference between the situations in Western and in Eastern Europe lies in the fact that whereas in the former place the one-sided provisions of the Peace Treaties have not been attended by political and economic dissolution, the countries lying, on the one hand, between Germany and Italy, and on the other, between Germany and Russia, as well as the South Eastern part of Europe, have become like a piece of mosaic, and the explosion of the forces called into play in the countries where the several minorities are domiciled, has been held in check only by the presence of large armies. A closer examination will convince the visitor to that region, if he is not prepared to accept the material broadcasted by the propaganda organisations of the parties concerned, that the problems of Western politics, no matter how grave and important those may be, are neither grave enough nor important enough to minimise the gravity and importance of the situation which, in consequence of the Peace Treaties, has, in an arbitrary fashion, been created and maintained in the Eastern part of Europe. The unprejudiced conclusion arrived at after a personal study of the question must be that the great military preparedness, exceeding by far the armaments of pre-war times, which is required for the maintenance of the Peace Treaties in this part of Europe, is not directed against

the fallen monarchs from whose tyranny the peoples had to be freed, but that it is needed to allow of one part of the population keeping the other part — more than 50 million souls — under alien rule and oppression against their will. In other words, oppression and tyranny are rife as heretofore, only now, in keeping with the spirit of the age, they are masked in the guise of Democracy. Clearly those great military forces are being held in readiness against something; this something, however, as the conquered states are completely disarmed, is no longer an inimical army, but the masses of the population whose fate was decided, who were driven under alien subjection, without their being consulted — the people who cannot and will not acquiesce in oppression.

All praise is due to Mr. E. Alexander Powell who visited the frontiers of the several European countries at variance with one another and who did his best to expose in an unprejudiced way all the difficulties of this impossible situation. He is quite right in saying that some amelioration of the situation must be found speedily; for the Treaties of Paris, having overthrown the great political and economic units, have done nothing in the way of construction. What can be upheld only by force of arms cannot be stable, but is merely a source of further changes. According to the author, change can only then be peaceful if the governements of the states of Western Europe treat seriously of the situation here. Otherwise only another war may be expected — a war desired by nobody, butwhich may be made unavoidable is spite of us, by the oppression of the peoples.

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 1927 Mr. E. Alexander Powell made a journey of over twelve thousand miles in the East of Europe, and in his work entitled "Embattled Borders" gave a faithful picture of the dangerous and unsettled situation which he found everywhere from the Adria to the Baltic Sea. According to the chapter of that work entitled "The Danger on the Danube" the place where the fire smoulders is in the heart of Europe, in the Basin of the Danube. The peace of Europe and of the whole world will not be secure and permanent until that smouldering fire is quenched. The key to a solution of the situation is in the hands of the English-speaking public. When the peoples of Great Britain and America will become acquainted with the truth about the situation, it is certain they will find some equable solution. For this reason it is important that this chapter of Mr. E. Alexander Powell's work should reach the English reading public in the form of a separate book.

The United States are represented at Belgrade by dr. John Dyneley Prince, formerly dean of the Grammar school of Newyork University, who is one of the most accomplished linguists of the world. When he learned that I contemplated visiting Yugoslavia and Hungary he sent me a letter for presentation to the frontier authorities written in Croat by his own hand, and on the day of our departure from the Serb capital he presented me with a similar document written in Serbian. Then, as an afterthought, he dashed off a third letter, this time in Hungarian.

I had been assured in Belgrade that we could quite easily reach Budapest in a single day, but darkness found us only as far as Zenta, where we spent the night in a scrupulously clean little inn ambitiously called the Grand Amerika Hotel. The proprietor, a naturalized American of Serb origin, told us that his wife, whom he had married in Indianapolis and who had never been out of the United States, was on her way over to join him. I wonder what her feelings were when she got her first view of Zenta and the Grand Amerika Hotel.

It was noon of the second day before we reached the Hungarian border near Szeged. The formalities

involved in getting out of Yugoslavia were such as might have been expected on leaving Sing Sing, but here they were merely exasperating. We first called at the police station in the little border town—I forget its name—to have our passports inspected and viséd; next to the custom-house at the railway station, where our identity papers and those connected with the car were scrutinized and stamped by another set of officials; then to the headquarters of the military police, where a soldier was assigned to accompany us to the border itself, two miles beyond the town. The officer in command of the frontier guard conscientiously went through our papers all over again, but, being unable to discover anything wrong with them, affixed another stamp and waved us on. "Thank God, we're through at last," I said to myself, and stepped on the accelerator. But my self-congratulations were somewhat premature, for we had not proceeded half a kilometer when a Serb sentry appeared from a thatched hut beside the road and halted us with ported rifle. "Passport!" he said gruffly, regarding us as suspiciously as though we were escaping convicts. We satisfied him of our respectability, however; he swung the road-bar upward, and a moment later we rolled past a red-white-and-green striped post and upon Hungarian soil.

There was no sentry in sight, but a sign in Magyar directed us, as nearly as we could decipher it, to a little railway station half a mile away. This proved

to be the Hungarian customs. But the solitary soldier in charge was not accustomed to having travelers arrive from the south by motor, and our triptych was a profound mystery to him. Fortunately, I remembered the letter in Hungarian given me by Dr. Prince. It was an open sesame. "Go ahead," said the soldier courteously, after he had read it. "This says that you are Americans, and that's enough for me. Besides, it's almost dinner time."

* * *

In the Szabadsag Tér in Budapest stands a congeries of statuary which, though possessing scant artistic merit, is one of the most significant and appealing in the world. There are four groups, North, East, South, and West. They symbolize the territories—comprising more than seven tenths of the country as it was before the war—which were detached from Hungary by the treaty of Trianon. Just as the emblems of mourning which for nearly half a century decked the Strasbourg statue in the Place de la Concorde mutely testified to France's grief and irreconcilability over the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, so the presence of these statues in the heart of the Magyar capital serves as a poignant reminder to Hungarians of *their* lost provinces, and keeps alive a determination eventually to regain them. As long as they stand, there can be no genuine peace in central Europe, Hungary will

smolder with resentment and unrest, the shadow of fear will hover over the countries which profited by her dismemberment, and the whole valley of the Danube will remain a powder magazine.

It is one of the parodies, as it is one of the paradoxes, of history that France should have been instrumental in inflicting on Hungary a vastly greater injustice than she herself suffered by the loss of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871; that Italy, six hundred thousand of whose sons laid down their lives for the redemption of *Italia irredenta*, should have helped to create a *Hungaria irredenta;* that England, which entered the war to restore the independence of Belgium, should have consented to upward of three million Hungarians being handed over to alien rule. Though it is true that the United States escaped the reproach of being a party to the treaty of Trianon and concluded a separate peace with Hungary the following year, we Americans cannot absolve ourselves from all responsibility for the wrong that was done and the highly dangerous situation which it has created. For Hungary capitulated, when not a single enemy soldier was on her soil, on the express understanding that the terms of peace should be based on the "points," "ends," and "particulars" —twenty-seven in all—formulated by President Wilson.

It is true that the refusal of the Senate to ratify the treaty of Versailles, inextricably interwoven as it was with the covenant of the League of Nations,

left the United States without a voice in the councils of the allies and enormously weakened America's influence in Europe at a highly critical period in European affairs. But it is equally true that had America vigorously protested, either through the organs of public opinion or through the Government at Washington, had she said to the allies and particularly to the representatives of the little parasitic nations, "Hungary is not getting a square deal; the promises given her are not being kept; you have broken the pledge made to her in the name of the allies by President Wilson; in forcing her to accept such terms you are making a mockery of the principles for which we fought, and sowing the seeds of future trouble," such a protest would have been heeded.

But it was not made. Our vision was still distorted by the passions engendered by the great conflict. Our hearing was dulled by the din of the propagandists. In our hearts still lurked a desire for revenge on those who had opposed us in the war. "The Hungarians fought against us, didn't they?" most Americans would have demanded. "They were Germany's allies, weren't they? Yes? Very well, then. Let them take their medicine. Give them all that is coming to them. And let it be good and plenty".

In the Grand Trianon at Versailles, on June 4, 1920, was signed the fourth of a series of pacts which, so the victors unctuously proclaimed, were designed to right the wrongs of oppressed peoples and bring lasting peace to a distracted world. Yet

it is difficult for any fair-minded person who is familiar with the lands and peoples affected by it to study that extraordinary document without becoming convinced that it was dictated by motives of political expediency, vindictiveness, greed, jealousy, and fear. It was called a treaty of peace, yet nearly every clause contains the seed of future wars or revolutions; it is as packed with potential trouble as a case of TNT; it was referred to as a settlement, yet it settled nothing.

By the terms of the treaty of Trianon, Hungary, admittedly the least culpable of the enemy states, was shorn of approximately seven tenths of her prewar area and nearly a third of her Magyar population. In other words, 90,000 square miles of territory and close to 3,000,000 people of Hungarian blood were apportioned between Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Austria as a pie might be divided among a gang of hungry boys. Yet before Congress, on February 11, 1918, President Wilson had solemnly declared that "peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty, as if they were chattels or pawns in a game," and followed it up with the further declaration, on July 4 of the same year, that the ends for which the associated peoples of the world were fighting included "the settlement of every question, whether of territory or of sovereignty, of economic arrangement or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by

the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery."

"The Treaty" [of Trianon], to quote the Encyclopaedia Britannica, a publication which cannot be charged with a bias in favor of the central powers, "took from Hungary all her gold, silver, copper, salt and mercury mines; all but one of her iron mines; her largest and best collieries; and 86% of her forests. The only branch of productive territory of which she retained over half is viticulture (68%)." It might have been added, with equal truth, that the treaty also took from her the whole of her seaboard, a great part of her inland waterways, most of her railways, all save a negligible fraction of her merchant marine, her most important industrial cities, and her richest wheat-growing plains As though this were not enough, the small mutilated trunk (constituting only 28 per cent of the original kingdom) was saddled with 46 per cent. of the whole foreign debt of the prosperous pre-war country, and, in addition, an undefined burden of reparations. One wonders why the treaty-makers stopped where they did—why they did not carry the job through to its logical conclusion and wipe Hungary off the map altogether by some partition such as that perpetrated at the Congress of Vienna which extinguished Poland for a time.

Such, then, were the penalties imposed upon a country whose Government entered the war under protest, the Hungarian prime minister, Count Stephen Tisza, being the only person present at the fateful crown councils held at Vienna in July, 1914, who had the courage to oppose the attack on Serbia And it was the same great statesman who, once war had been declared, strenuously opposed the introduction of unlimited submarine warfare and Germany's schemes for territorial aggrandizement. Such was the ungenerous treatment accorded to the only one of the enemy states which emerged from the conflict with a record unsullied by cruelties, excesses, or breaches of international law, it being generally admitted that of all the soldiers of the central powers the Hungarians were the cleanest fighters.

Seeing that historical obligations were repeatedly advanced as pretexts for the final unjust settlement, I may be permitted to remind my readers that Europe owes a twofold debt of gratitude to Hungary. In the tenth century Hungary was the bulwark of Europe against Asiatic invasion, the great champion of the Cross against the Crescent; and in 1919 Hungary again saved Europe, this time from an even greater peril, by overthrowing the Communist régime established by the Reds under Béla Kun. Yet the nations which she had saved in turn from the Turk and the Bolshevist repaid her with dismemberment, impoverishment, and humiliation. How, it may

be asked, can the treaty-makers reconcile the policy which they pursued at the Trianon in 1920 with their attitude in 1922 at Lausanne, when they abjectly accepted the terms dictated by the Turks, whose hands were still reddened with the blood of slaughtered Christians?

While we are discussing the subject, it can do no harm to recall the fact that Hungary may be said to have been only technically at war with the United States and England, and that toward them she showed her good feelings by refusing to intern her American and British residents, who were permitted to continue their usual occupations. An illustration of this friendly tolerance toward the nationals of two nations which the Hungarians have always admired is provided by the story told me by an English trainer of race-horses whom I met in southern Hungary shortly after the armistice. He told me that whenever the news of an allied victory leaked through, he and his friends celebrated the event at one of the leading restaurants of Budapest. The table was decked with the flags of the allies and patriotic toasts were drunk without evoking anything more than an occasional jesting reproof from their acquaintances among the clientele of the establishment. Had a group of Hungarians in New York or London attempted to celebrate a victory of the central powers in similar fashion they would have been mobbed, if nothing worse.

Who were the receivers of the loot apportioned

at Trianon? You will find their identity unflatteringly but unmistakably indicated by those groups of statuary in the Szabadság Tér which I have already mentioned.

That Serbia, one of the greatest sufferers by the war, should be recompensed for her losses was eminently right and proper. To the Serbs Hungary was compelled to cede the provinces of Croatia and Slavonia, with their overwhelmingly Slavic populations, which was essentially just; and also, which was not just, the Voivodina, in Hungary proper, with nearly half a million Magyars. It might be mentioned, incidentally, that the Croats and Slovenes do not appear to be getting along any better under Serb rule than they did under Hungarian, having, as their leaders assert, merely exchanged one tyranny for another. The western Slavs have always been an unruly and contentious people, however, and Hungary, I imagine, is secretly rather glad to be rid of them.

The greatest beneficiary by Hungary's dismemberment was Rumania, which was awarded the whole of Transylvania, a province enormously rich in minerals and forests; nearly all of the Bánát, which is a fertile and highly cultivated agricultural country; and a broad stretch of the wheat-growing Hungarian plain, the annexed territories having a Magyar population of 1,650,000. This, with the Austrian province of the Bukovina, was the price which the allies, by one of their numerous secret treaties, agreed in 1916 to pay Rumania in return for an im-

mediate declaration of war. It is true that the Rumanian army promptly ran away, and that during the remaining years of the war Rumania was more of a liability than an asset to the allied cause, but the allies had made the bargain and they stuck to it.

It is far more difficult to justify the transfers of territory on the north, where the all-of-a-sudden republic of Czechoslovakia was permitted to annex Carpathian Ruthenia and Hungarian Slovakia, the latter province having a million Magyar inhabitants. The excuses advanced by the treaty-makers for their excessive generosity to Rumania cannot be applied to the Czechoslovak transaction—first, because the Magyars of Slovakia live in solid blocks along the Hungarian border instead of being intermingled with other nationalities as is the case in Transylvania; and, secondly, because the Entente was under no obligations to the hyphenate state which they had created, save perhaps for the handful of Czech "legionaries" who deserted to the allies. The chief claim of the Czechs to allied gratitude is that they were thoroughly disloyal to their own side. As for the Slovaks, they have no claim at all, for it is to their everlasting credit that they refused to turn traitors and fought gallantly on the side of the central powers to the end.

The most astounding and incomprehensible of all the decisions made by the Trianon treaty-makers, however, was the allotment to Austria of the Burgenland, a long and very narrow strip of territory in

western Hungary with about 90,000 Magyar inhabitants. Just why Austria, which was as much an enemy nation as Hungary and infinitely more culpable, should have been thus rewarded is a question for which no one seems to have a very convincing answer. There must be reasons for everything that happens, outside of lunatic asylums, as Mr. George Birmingham pithily remarks, but it is sometimes very hard to find them.

If the allies were really sincere in their protestations that they wished to deal fairly by the minorities, if they were working for the greatest good of the peoples of central Europe, with no thought of political expediency or revenge, why, it may pertinently be asked, were Hungary's repeated appeals for plebiscites refused in every instance save one, and that an insignificant one? A series of plebiscites would at least have given the peoples directly affected by the treaty opportunities to express their own preferences as to what should become of them, which ought to have counted for something. If, on the other hand, a plebiscite is not a satisfactory method of settling such problems, as some claim, then why, pray, were plebiscites held in Schleswig, Luxemburg, Klagenfurt, Allenstein, in Transcaucasia even? Why were the Turks promised a plebiscite in Thrace and the Hungarians refused one in Transylvania? Why is the sovereignty of the Saar to be settled by plebiscite in 1935 and that of Upper Silesia determined by the same method the year fol-

THE STEWARD OF THE CROWN OF ST. STEPHEN
ADMIRAL NICHOLAS HORTHY, REGENT OF HUNGARY

This sailor-statesman has led his country through difficulties such as few men in history have been called upon to face. The Hungarians might go much further and do much worse than to choose him to occupy their empty throne

lowing? These are embarrassing questions, but the public has a right to ask them.

Of course, those who were behind the scenes during the treaty-making at the Trianon know the answer. The nations of the Little Entente—Czecho-slovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia—didn't dare to submit their claims to plebiscitary decisions because they knew that they would lose. Because France desperately needed the aid of the Little Entente nations for carrying out her coercive schemes against a recalcitrant Germany she supported them in their refusal to permit plebiscites in the debated regions. England, though secretly disgusted with the whole sorry business, found it inexpedient to oppose France on a question which did not, after all, directly affect her own interests, particularly as she foresaw the need of French support against Turkey. And Italy, which had just annexed against their wishes 280,000 German Austrians in South Tyrol and 230,000 Yugoslavs in the Veneto, could hardly have been expected to look with favor on a scheme of self-determination which might set an embarrassing precedent.

The case presented by the Hungarians was so strong, however, there was so much danger of the public having its eyes opened to the truth of the situation, so much fear of a revulsion of public opinion, that the chairman of the conference, M. Millerand, then prime minister of France, sought to smooth matters over for the time being by promis-

ing Hungary in the name of the allied powers that, if it was found that the new frontiers involved any economic or ethnical injustice, she could appeal to the League of Nations. Thereupon the Council of Ambassadors, which always knew on which side its bread was buttered and which always had the final say, announced that any alteration of the frontiers as fixed by the treaty, however slight, would constitute a breach of the treaty, and therefore could not be permitted. I ask you now, in all seriousness, if a more fantastic or asinine situation can be found outside the pages of "Alice in Wonderland."

I shall be pardoned, I trust, if at this point I digress from my narrative long enough to give an outline—I shall endeavor to sketch it in a few broad strokes—of the momentous events which occurred in Hungary during the period between the armistice and the signing of the peace treaty, for a knowledge of these events is essential if one is to view in its true perspective what happened at the Trianon or what is happening in the valley of the Danube to-day.

After the death in November, 1916, of Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, that curious political and ethnical mosaic known as the Dual Monarchy began rapidly to crumble. Austria was already weak; and the abrupt dismissal by the young Emperor Charles of the Hungarian prime minister, Count Stephen Tisza, broke one of the few ties by which the two nations were still united. The

protracted war had become extremely and increasingly unpopular in Hungary, the publication in January, 1918, of President Wilson's fourteen points, which were accepted with implicit faith by the Hungarian people, contributing to the general desire for peace. The sufferings and privations caused by the blockade had not only encouraged the defeatist propaganda; they had paved the way for the spread of communistic ideas brought home by the great numbers of Hungarian soldiers released from Russian prison camps after the treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

On October 25, 1918, the extreme left wing of the radicals and Socialists sympathetic to bolshevism formed the so-called National Council under the presidency of Count Michael Károlyi, a nobleman of distinguished family but of the most dubious reputation, The proclamations issued by the National Council foreshadowed the coming of bolshevism, and within less than a week Budapest was completely in the hands of the revolutionaries. On October 31 Károlyi was named prime minister, and the same afternoon his bitterest enemy, Count Tisza, the strong man of Hungary and one of the ablest statesmen in Europe, was murdered by emissaries of the council in his own drawing-room in the presence of his family.

At Villa Giusti, near Padua, on November 3, the armistice between the Austro-Hungarian and Italian armies was signed. A line of demarcation was

drawn in the southwest; elsewhere the old political frontier remained unchanged. But Károlyi, believing that he could obtain better terms from the Entente, hastened to Belgrade, where, on November 13, he concluded a separate convention with General Franchet d'Esperey. The terms stipulated by the French commander were far more onerous, however, than those granted by the Italians, the new line of demarcation being well within the old frontier. It was provided that, though the Hungarian troops were to withdraw behind this line, Hungarian civil control should continue to function in the evacuated territories, but before the ink in which it was written was fairly dry the agreement was broken. Hungarian officials were removed wholesale, the Hungarian police and gendarmerie disarmed, communications interrupted, and the inhabitants of the occupied regions forced to take oaths of allegiance to Yugoslavia, Rumania, or Czechoslovakia, as the case might be, many of them even being pressed into the military service of those countries. Even at this early stage Hungary's enemies made it amply clear that she had no rights which they felt bound to respect, that they had no intention of keeping the pledges made her unless it suited their plans to do so.

The thirteenth of November is a tragic date in Hungarian history, for on that day came from Belgrade the news of Károlyi's failure to obtain even moderately lenient terms from the allies, while from Vienna was flashed a message that the imperial Gov-

ernment had completely collapsed and that the Emperor Charles had announced his abdication. The country was bewildered, stunned. Utterly disheartened, the people lapsed into a state of apathetic resignation. So there was virtually no protest when, at a mass meeting held in Budapest by the communistic elements, the Károlyi gevernment, without consulting Parliament, proclaimed Hungary a republic and Michael Károlyi its president.

There now appeared upon the Hungarian stage a peculiarly sinister figure in the person of a young Jew, born in northern Hungary, named Béla Kun. You will picture him as a plump, rather dapper little man, with a head too large for his body, a sensuous mouth, an overprominent nose, and bright, shifting eyes. A lawyer by profession and a journalist by avocation, he had obtained a commission in the army —he commanded a supply train—was captured by the Russians early in the war, was in Russia at the time of the revolution, and became an apostle of bolshevism among the Hungarian prisoners of war. His peculiar talents were appreciated by Lenin, who, providing him with a forged passport, sent him back to Hungary disguised as a Red Cross doctor. Amply supplied with money by Moscow, he betook himself to Budapest, where he promptly set about the task which had been assigned him of upsetting the established order. He considered himself Lenin's viceroy in central Europe and held long daily conversations by wireless with his master. As the result of a con-

flict with the police, Kun was wounded and in prison when the Károlyi cabinet, as a protest against the harsh conditions imposed by the allies, handed over to him the reins of government. That Károlyi, whose family stands for all that is best in Hungary, should have deliberately betrayed his already distracted country to the Reds, explains why he is held in loathing and contempt by all decent Hungarians.

Now the Reds were in undisputed control of the Hungarian capital. The streets were patrolled by bands of armed Communists. The prisons were emptied, notorious criminals being turned loose to prey upon the helpless people. Suffrage was denied to priests, lunatics, and employers of labor. Private property was confiscated. Private houses and apartments were commandeered. The deposits intrusted to the banks were seized and communized. Foreign loans were repudiated. A force of Red guards was organized. The opponents of communism were persecuted, terrorized, tortured, murdered. Hundreds of innocent persons were shot or hung. For nineteen weeks the specter of fear stalked the streets of the Magyar capital.

It was the sturdy peasantry of the Hungarian plain who broke the power of bolshevism in central Europe. Kun had planned to convert them to bolshevism by force of arms, but the obstinate peasants remained as deaf to his threats as to his arguments. They stubbornly refused to exchange their wheat and potatoes for the paper money printed by the

Bo'sheviki, nor could the reign of terror which the Red leader instituted in the provinces make them change their minds. For these Magyars were folk of quite a different temper from the servile Russian muzhiks who had obeyed so blindly the orders of Lenin. They could be neither cajoled nor coerced. They merely sat tight, defied the Bolsheviki to do their worst, and waited in stolid patience for the good old days to come again. Meanwhile, Budapest with its million inhabitants was starving.

Bolshevist rule in Hungary collapsed so suddenly and amid such confusion that it is very difficult to determine just what happened. But one or two things stand out clearly. When the allies halted Kun's advance against the Czechs, and his forces in the south were driven back by the Rumanians, the dictator found himself in a desperate position, for he could no longer appeal to the distracted country on the grounds of nationalism. Moreover, the peasants were in an ugly mood and it was known that the best elements in the country were secretly organizing a counter-revolution. So, when word came that a Rumanian army had crossed the Tisza, Kun realized that his day was over and that his only hope of safety lay in flight. He made his escape to Vienna in a special train. Here he was locked up in the local lunatic asylum, but after an attempt had been made to rid the world of him by sending him poisoned Easter eggs—the laudable attempt failed because, being a Jew, he did not observe Easter—he was

shipped to Russia, where his fellow-Bolsheviki acclaimed him a hero and a martyr.

The restoration of a stable régime in Hungary proved extremely difficult owing to the attitude of the allies, particularly the Rumanians, the latter welcoming if not actually encouraging anarchy in the country because it provided them with a pretext for armed intervention, which, they hoped, might be prolonged into a permanent occupation.

In May, 1919, a counter-revolutionary government, which represented the best elements of the country, had been organized at Arad—already occupied by the Rumanians—under the presidency of Count Julius Károlyi, who should under no circumstances be confused with his cousin Michael. After a few days, however, the Rumanians sent the members of this government under military escort to Szeged, then occupied by French troops. After the flight of Béla Kun and the fall of the Commune the provisional government again moved its quarters, this time to the shores of Lake Balaton. Here the organization of a national army was intrusted to Admiral Nicholas Horthy, who had been the commander of the Austro-Hungarian fleet during the latter part of the war and had become a national hero as a result of his brilliant naval exploits in the Adriatic.

In Budapest, meanwhile, the popular Archduke Joseph had assumed the reins of government, but the Supreme Council in Paris refused to recognize any Habsburg in a position of authority in Hun-

gary. Things were in such a chaotic state, however, in Budapest, which had been occupied by the Rumanians, that the Council, becoming seriously alarmed, hastily despatched to that city four generals—an American, an Englishman, a Frenchman, and an Italian. The four generals found themselves fully occupied in thwarting the excesses of the Rumanians, who had literally run amuck, plundering state buildings and private residences alike and destroying wholesale such property as they were unable to ship out of the country. Every telephone instrument in the city was confiscated, plumbing fixtures were ripped out, delicate scientific instruments were taken from the government laboratories and then allowed to rust because the Rumanians did not know how to use them; furniture, tapestries, silverware, motor-cars, live stock, agricultural implements, machinery of all sorts were shipped to Rumania by the train-load, the value of the goods thus "requisitioned," according to a report sent to Paris by Colonel Loree, totaling nearly twenty millions of dollars. And this, mind you, when the war had been over for upward of nine months!

The Rumanians also attempted to loot the state museums, with their priceless art treasures, historical manuscripts, and scientific collections, but they were foiled in this by the energy and courage of General H. H. Bandholtz, the American member of the allied military commission. When word was brought to the fiery little general that the Rumanians

were pillaging the National Museum he jumped into his car, accompanied by a single aide, and drove at top speed to the museum. Backed up before the entrance was a row of army camions which Rumanian soldiers, under the direction of their officers, were loading with plunder. When General Bandholtz arrived on the scene they were carrying out a collection of stuffed birds! Armed only with a riding-crop, the American drove the looters out of the building, locked and sealed the doors, and sent word to the Rumanian commander that he would be held personally responsible by the allied commission for any further plundering.

So gross were the excesses committed by the Rumanians during their occupation of Budapest that Herbert Hoover, as chairman of the American Relief Administration, telegraphed to the Bucharest Government that he would discontinue all shipments of food supplies into Rumania unless the outrages immediately ceased. And the Rumanians, who had defied the Supreme Council with impunity, realized that it was not safe to disobey Hoover. It so happened that I was the guest of the late King Ferdinand at the castle of Pelesch in the Carpathians when this ultimatum was received. It is characteristic of the workings of the Rumanian mind that the king, ordinarily the quietest of men, became violently angry, accusing Mr. Hoover of attempting to coerce Rumania, under threat of starvation, into granting valuable oil concessions to certain American oil com-

panies in which, so the king alleged, the American food administrator was financially interested!

On November 14, 1919, the Rumanians, yielding to allied pressure, sullenly withdrew to the line of the Tisza, and Horthy rode into Budapest at the head of the small national army amid the frenzied cheers of the citizens. General elections were held in the following January; the new National Assembly restored and put into force the ancient constitution, and, the question of a king still being in abeyance, elected Horthy regent of Hungary unanimously and by acclamation.

Owing to the chaotic condition in which Hungary had been ever since the armistice, to the two revolutions, the Rumanian invasion, and the lack of any stable or responsible government, it was not until January, 1920, that the Hungarian peace delegation, headed by Count Albert Apponyi, Count Paul Teleki, and Count Stephen Bethlen, arrived in Paris.

Now, in partial explanation of what followed, it must be kept in mind that the Hungarians were late in coming to the peace table. The treaty with Germany had been signed at Versailles in the summer of 1919; the pact with Austria at St. Germain in October; and that with Bulgaria at Neuilly in November. The task involved in these three settlements had been a prodigious one, and before the arrival of the Hungarian delegates the principal allied statesmen had taken their departure, for their powers of personal application were exhausted and the domestic

affairs of their own countries urgently demanded their attention. President Wilson had long since hastened back to America to plead unavailingly the cause of the League of Nations. Lloyd George had returned to England to face a hostile Parliament and a discontented nation. Clemenceau, his government fallen, had sailed for India to seek relaxation in tiger-shooting. Orlando, discredited by the Fascisti, was living in semi-obscurity in Rome.

The withdrawal of the Big Four had left the drafting of the peace treaties with Germany's allies to the subordinate members of the allied delegations, and these substitutes were not strong enough to exercise anything like the authority and moderating influence which their predecessors had done. Moreover, though only half the work of restoring a lasting peace to Europe had been performed, the world's interest in peace-making had evaporated and the spotlight of publicity which had been focused continuously on Versailles rested only spasmodically on the Trianon, where the treaty with Hungary was drafted behind closed doors and signed amid general indifference on the part of the peoples of America and western Europe.

But there was no indifference on the part of those various minor nationalities which had asserted themselves since the war and stood to profit enormously from the settlements thus obscurely made. The reverberations of the last gun had scarcely died away before the spokesmen of all the little peoples of east-

ern Europe were awing, flitting toward Paris like vultures which scent a dying animal from afar. Here came Bratianu with his black beard and bullying roar; the venerable Pasic, acquisitive and uncompromising; Benès of the boyish face and the subtle mind, together with a horde of advisers, experts, secretaries, pamphleteers, and professional propagandists. Even the ubiquitous Queen Marie hastened up from Bucharest to lend the aid of her persuasiveness and charm. Tons of propaganda were printed and distributed; newspapers were subsidized; foreign publicists and public men who had an eye out for the main chance were bought up—or bought off—with money or decorations. Every conceivable interpretation was given to President Wilson's celebrated reference to "self-determination"; the theme was played continuously, with every sort of variation.

They knew exactly what they wanted, these special pleaders from beyond the Danube, and to gain their ends they utilized every means, played on every emotion, pulled every string. It was more like a rush of homesteaders to stake out claims on public lands than an orderly and equitable settlement of a problem which vitally affected the future peace of the world and the welfare of millions of human beings. No wonder that the neutral nations looked on with mingled astonishment and cynicism. It was an amazing spectacle—and a sorry one.

This was how grave abuses, containing the sure

seed of future wars, crept into the central European peace settlement. The surprising thing, indeed, when one recalls the apathy of the allies and the contempt shown for the lessons of history by the allied negotiators, is not that Hungary's enemies obtained so much, but that they did not obtain more. Had their original demands been agreed to, there would probably be no such country as Hungary on the map of Europe to-day. Rumania, for example, insisted that she be permitted to push her frontier as far westward as the Tisza. Yugoslavia laid claim to the important industrial city of Szeged with its adjacent territory and to Pécs with its valuable coal mines. And the Czechs and Yugoslavs jointly urged that their countries be connected by transforming a strip of territory running along the entire western frontier of Hungary into a "Slav corridor." Though these preposterous claims were not allowed, the cessions of Hungarian territory made to the neighboring states exceeded their wildest expectations.

The irresponsible and unintelligent fashion in which the new boundaries were drawn and a brand-new map of central Europe substituted almost overnight for the slow growth of centuries is illustrated by a story told me by a well-known English diplomat who was attached to the British peace delegation at the Trianon. While the question of the delimitation of Hungary's eastern frontier was under discussion, an English traveler, regarded as something of an authority on central

European affairs, happened to drop into the conference room, whereupon he was invited to express his opinion. Being in a hurry to keep a luncheon engagement, he paused only long enough to pick up a pencil and on the map which was spread upon the table to roughly sketch a line. "That," said he carelessly, "is approximately my idea of where the frontier should run." Upon opening his morning paper a few days later he was astounded to find that the line of demarcation which he had so casually suggested had actually been adopted by the treaty-makers as the new frontier.

I suppose that some partition of Hungary was inevitable after the war. Included in the old Hungary, remember, were numerous large minorities, and there can be no denying that in many cases these were subjected to injustice and oppression. Consequently, the Hungarians did not come into court with clean hands. It is very difficult to decide, however, whether the treatment now being accorded to the Magyar minorities in Rumania and Czechoslovakia is any improvement on the fashion in which the Rumanian and Czech minorities were treated in the old days by the Hungarians. About all that can be said with any confidence is that the allies, in turning Transylvania over to the Rumanians, and Slovakia and Ruthenia to the Czechs, have not only failed lamentably to improve matters for the inhabitants of those regions but they have created an extremely dangerous situation.

While admitting the impossibility of drawing boundaries which would work no hardships and which would be just to all the peoples concerned, the point I wish to make is that the present frontiers were fixed on no principle—economic, ethnographic, geographic, or political. There is nothing which makes for security or permanence. For the surgical operation performed on Hungary by the amateur map-makers at the Trianon no adequate reason has ever been shown, and it is certain that a high-spirited people like the Hungarians will never rest until the injury done them has been repaired. It is obvious that they cannot acquiesce in an arrangement which strangles their commerce, erects barriers where no natural divisions exist, and leaves more than three millions of their people at the mercy of foreigners who hate them.

Granting the necessity of making certain rectifications in the frontiers, one still wonders why the job was done so clumsily and unintelligently. I realize, of course, that the boundary-makers were confronted by a very perplexing, indeed, an almost insoluble, problem. If you will take trouble to examine an ethnographic map of the Danube basin you will see at a glance what I mean. Pre-war Hungary consisted of a vast oval plain surrounded by a fence of mountains. The inhabitants of this plain formed one of the most homogeneous peoples is the world—descendants of those warrior tribesmen who came riding out of Asia in the dim dawn of history. Through-

The Houses of Parliament

The High Courts of Justice

THE CAPITAL OF THE MAGYARS

out the centuries they have steadfastly refrained from intermarriage with the neighboring peoples and, as a consequence, the old Magyar strain has remained astonishingly pure. But the situation was quite different along the fringes of the plain, where, as the result of successive invasions and migrations, other peoples—Germans, Czechs, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Rumanians, Serbs, Croats, Slovenes—had become inextricably intermingled with the original Magyar population. As a consequence, it is hard to decide which an ethnogaphic map of central Europe most resembles—a patchwork quilt or a jig-saw puzzle.

The Hungarians assert that the territories ceded to Rumania and Czechoslovakia under the terms of the treaty of Trianon are in spirit Hungarian and are inhabited in the main by people of the Magyar race, supporting the latter contention with elaborately colored maps and impressive arrays of figures. Now the truth is that every town of any size in Transylvania, and nearly every town in the Carpathians, is predominantly Magyar, in many cases almost wholly so. But it is equally true that the country districts of Transylvania are chiefly inhabited by Rumanians, and in the Carpathians by men of a variety of other races, mainly Slovaks and Ruthenians. In fact, were an honest census taken in these disputed territories, town and country being regarded as one, it is possible that the Magyars would be found to be slightly in the minority.

Every one must recognize, of course, that it would be utterly out of the question to delimit a frontier which would leave all the Magyars on one side and all the non-Magyars on the other. Even the Hungarians admit this. What they object to is that there has been no give and take; that the allies, in order to give all the Slavs to Yugoslavia, all the Rumanians to Rumania, and all the Slovaks and Ruthenians to Czechoslovakia, likewise handed over to those nations three and a quarter million Magyars. In certain cases, moreover, solid blocks of Magyars were handed over to their enemies for purely strategic reasons. For Hungary it has been a case of "Heads I win, tails you lose."

As might have been expected, enormous economic difficulties have resulted from the unintelligent fashion in which the new boundaries were drawn. Esztergom, the ancient capital of the Árpád kings and the birthplace of St. Stephen, is a case in point. The city itself, being on the right bank of the Danube, remains in Hungary, but the railway station, being on the left bank, is now in Czechoslovakia. And the bridge having been destroyed, there is no longer any connection between the two.

Consider the case of the miners of Salgó Tarján. The town in which they live is now in Czechoslovakia, whereas the entrances to the mines in which they earn their living are on the Hungarian side of the line. So every morning when they go to work they have to present their passports, properly viséd, to

two sets of frontier officials, and they have to repeat the performance every evening when they go home. Imagine the same rule applied to every person who lives in Brooklyn or Jersey City but works in New York!

Another interesting case is provided by Pécs and Szeged, in the south of Hungary. Pécs has coal mines, and Szeged, an important industrial city, has factories which require coal. The distance by railway between the two cities is only about fourscore miles, but the railway twice crosses the Yugoslav-Hungarian frontier, so that coal sent by that route would have to pay an import duty each time. The only way, therefore, for the Szeged factories to obtain Pécs coal is via Budapest, which entails a detour of something over five hundred miles. To again employ an American parallel, it is as though Scranton coal, in order to reach Philadelphia had to be shipped via Buffalo.

In the old days economic life in Hungary was very simple. The farmers of the plain sold their grain and live stock to the people of the mountains, and the highlanders found a ready market for their coal and lumber among the folk on the plain. It might be supposed that this common-sense interchange of commodities would have continued, regardless of the artificial political barriers erected by the mapmakers of the Trianon. But such is not the case. On the contrary, commercial intercourse between Hungary and her former provinces has been obstructed

by every device that the ingenuity and maliciousness of her neighbors can suggest.

The theory of the allied powers was that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy fell, not because it was composed of numerous nationalities, but because the rights and liberties of the subject nationalities had not been adequately secured. To guard against a recurrence of these abuses they introduced a new system into European politics—the system of international guarantee of the rights of minorities and international supervision of their protection. In order to secure these rights, special articles were included in the various peace treaties and special minorities treaties were concluded between the principal allied powers and the succession states. Generally speaking, these instruments give the following guarantees to the minority populations:

1. Rights equal to those of any nationals of the country to protection of life and liberty and the free exercise of their religion.

2. A special right to the acquisition of the nationality of the country in question and to the exercise of civil and political rights.

3. Free use of their mother-tongue in public life, in trade, in religion, in the press, in publications, in public meetings, and in the courts of law.

4. The right of maintaining at their own expense charitable, religious, or educational institutions.

5. In districts in which the minority constitutes a considerable proportion of the population instruction in the primary schools of the state shall be given in the language

of that minority, and the minority shall be assured an equitable share in the sums provided by the state and municipal budgets for educational, religious, or charitable purposes.

Though under pressure from the great powers, the Rumanian Government was forced to sign the minorities treaties, it became amply clear from the outset that it had no intention of abiding by them, the excuse offered for violating them being that they limited the nation's sovereignty. As to the policy which should be pursued toward the Hungarian minorities the public men and publicists of Rumania are divided into two camps which hold diametrically opposed points of view.

The attitude of the more intelligent and more far-seeing party, which, unfortunately, represent only a small minority, has been voiced by an eminent Rumanian scholar, Professor Trajan Bratu.

"Whether we like it or not," he writes, "we have racial and religious minorities in our country which form one third of the total and one half of the town population. We can neither destroy them, nor force them to leave the country. It is evident that the interests of our country demand that we should live in harmony with them, not estrange them and turn them into enemies."

The opposite and popular point of view is expressed by Mr. E. D. B. Vasiliu, an outspoken apostle of chauvinism and coercion, who declares that "These minorities are assimilable and must be

put under the terror and influence of the original population."

And it is this latter policy that the Bucharest Government has attempted to carry out, with the result that a quarter of a million of the Hungarian inhabitants of Transylvania, the greater number belonging to the intelligent middle classes, have been forced to leave the country. This wholesale exodus of a people who had settled in Transylvania nearly a thousand years before Rumania came into existence was accomplished by numerous means—by eviction from their homes, sequestration of their property, prohibition of their language, closing of their religious and educational institutions, by intimidation, flogging, and even torture. The history of modern Europe contains few more shameful chapters.

Because I have no wish to appear sensational; because I am, generally speaking, opposed to "muck-raking"; and because I am fully aware that I shall be charged with being a propagandist for Hungary, it is with considerable hesitation that I have decided to clinch my statements by enumerating a few of the outrages which the Rumanian Government has inflicted on its helpless Hungarian minorities. I use "outrage" advisedly; it is the only adequate word. Let me make it amply clear, however, that I hold no grudge against the Rumanians or their Government. The former, as individuals, I rather like; their Government—from which, incidentally, as from the members of the ruling family, I have received many

courtesies—I consider one of the most corrupt and tyrannical in Europe. But even at the risk of being held ungrateful, I feel that it is my duty to tell my readers what I firmly believe to be the truth about the Transylvanian situation.

I have been in Transylvania on several occasions since the annexation; I have talked with Rumanians and Hungarians of all classes and of all shades of opinion; and the instances which I shall quote, far from being untrustworthy rumors, are amply susceptible of proof. Some of them are authenticated by official orders; others are taken from the report of the commission sent to Transylvania by the American Unitarian Association, the veracity and fairness of whose members are above suspicion.

The first and simplest stage in the Rumanization of Transylvania was to change the external appearance of the towns. Immediately after the occupation, the military authorities ordered not only the removal of the Hungarian inscriptions on public buildings, railways, and schools, which was doubtless justifiable, but also the changing of the street names and shop signs, even in those communities with unmixed Hungarian and Saxon populations. In Vajdahunyad four days were allowed for changing the shop signs from Hungarian to Rumanian; in Zilah, a fortnight; in Csikszereda the proprietors of two cafés—the Kossuth and the Europe—were fined 1000 lei each for not changing the names of their establishments within the allotted time.

The director of railways, General Jonescu, issued an order forbidding railway employees to announce the names of the stations or to give any information to travelers in Hungarian. "No excuse," the order reads, "will be accepted for giving any information to anybody in another language than Rumanian."

The director of the post and telegraph office at Temesvar sent the following notification to his subordinates: "I wish to inform all superior and inferior officials that I shall no longer tolerate the use of Hungarian in the offices. Customers must always be answered in Rumanian, unless they are absolutely ignorant of the language."

The chief educational inspector of Arad ordered that the pupils of the state schools must use Rumanian exclusively. "The minister of education," the order ran, "wishes to exclude all kinds of racial and religious strife from the schools. This can only be realized if the pupils use Rumanian instead of their mother-tongue. In consequence he orders that they shall use that language even in their private intercourse."

The commission sent to Rumania by the American Unitarian Association reported that in some places the churches of that denomination had been compelled to expunge the familiar Unitarian motto, ‚'*Egy az Isten*" (God is One), over their doors; and that the authorities had notified the Unitarian bishop of Transylvania that his official communications

MAP OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN
CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE.
1 Albanians
2 Bulgarians
3 Croats
4 Esthonia
5 Germans
6 Latvianians
7 Lithuanians
8 Magyars
9 Polanders
10 Rumanians
11 Russians
12 Ruthenians
13 Slovaks
14 Slovenes
15 Turks
16 Ukrainians
Tallinn
ESTHONIA
Riga
LATVIA
LITHUANIA
Kaunas
RUSSIA
Moscow
Danzig
Berlin
GERMANY
Warsaw
POLAND
Kiev
UKRAINA
CZECHOS

RUMANIA
YUGOSLAVIA
BULGARIA
GREECE
ALBANIA
TURKEY
ITALY
ADRIATIC
BLACK SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Belgrade
Bucharest
Sofia
Tirana
Athens
Angora
Rome

would not be answered until the words of the motto on his ancient seal of office, "*Unitarius püspök,*" were changed to Rumanian.

Though the Hague convention specifically forbids "all seizure or destruction of, or wilful damage to, institutions, historic monuments, works of art and science," the Rumanian authorities ordered the removal or destruction of all memorials, statues, and tablets which might serve to remind the Hungarian minorities of their past history.

In Brasso the memorial of Árpád, the Magyar prince who led the Hungarians into their present country a thousand years ago was blown up. The statue of the Emperor Francis Joseph in Karánsebes was demolished as a symbol of "the humiliating and shameful past." Both in Nagyszeben and Ujszentes the memorial tablets of Petőfi, the greatest Hungarian poet, were broken into bits. In Marosvásárhely the Rumanian mayor ordered all the frescoes and stained-glass windows of the town hall and the museum to be destroyed because they depicted scenes from Hungarian history.

In many parts of the annexed territories the wearing of Hungarian costumes, the singing of Hungarian songs, the dancing of Hungarian dances even, have been forbidden under penalty of fines or imprisonment. In the spring of 1923 the Bucharest Government issued an order that all books printed in the Hungarian language in Hungary since 1919 and found in Rumanian territory were to be confiscated.

This order included not only propagandist publications but translations of the works of Homer, Goethe, and Shakespeare!

From reputable sources I heard numerous stories of the brutalities—imprisonment, floggings, tortures even—inflicted by the Rumanians on innocent persons for no other reason than that they were Hungarians, but I shall not repeat them here because I am unable to substantiate them, though I have no reason to believe that they are untrue.

It should be kept in mind, of course, that ever since the close of the war the Rumanians have been highly excited and the country in a continuous state of political turmoil; that public opinion has been systematically inflamed by chauvinistic propaganda; that many of the minor officials doubtless acted on their own initiative, without the authority of the central government; and that numerous Rumanian individuals seized the opportunity offered by the annexation, with the confusion which ensued, to vent their spite on those who had formerly been their masters and to satisfy ancient grudges. The undeniable fact remains, however, that the Hague convention, to which Rumania is a signatory, has been repeatedly violated; that the minorities treaties have been treated as scraps of paper; and that Rumania's new subjects have in many cases been denied those elementary rights which they have been solemnly guaranteed and to which every dictate of human justice entitles them.

In the spring of 1922 the curtain rose on the last act of the tragedy of the non-Rumanian peoples of Transylvania when the expropriation of their lands began under the provisions of the agrarian reform, whose chief aim was the destruction of the Hungarian landed interests. I have not the space at my disposal wherein to discuss the arguments for and against this radical measure. Justly administered, there is much to be said in its favor, for in theory it takes land from those who have more than their needs require and gives it to those who have little or none. But it has not been justly administered in Transylvania. It is enough to say here, however, that the peasants have received an average of less than three acres apiece; that more than one third of the total area expropriated has been retained by the state; that the owners have been reimbursed to the extent of only about 5 per cent. of the market value of the lands taken from them, and even this was not in cash but in non-transferable government bonds; that the agricultural prosperity of Transylvania has suffered enormously; and that the wh le transaction has been characterized by scandals which have implicated some of the highest officials in the kingdom.

It is necessary, however, to distinguish between the cases of those Hungarian residents of Transylvania who have acquired Rumanian citizenship, and whose properties the Rumanian Government therefore has a legal right to do with as it pleases, and the cases of the other owners of property in Tran-

sylvania who are not Rumanian citizens. To those French, British, and Italian nationals whose holdings in Transylvania have been expropriated the Rumanian Government has given full indemnity, paying them approximately five million dollars a year. I know of a French countess, for example, whose claim was paid in full, and in cash, within a week. The Transylvanian landowners of Hungarian nationality, on the other hand, have not been compensated at all. It is against this action, which is not only discriminatory but which violates the peace treaties and all international law, that the Hungarian Government has lodged a protest with the League of Nations.

Paragraph 250 of the treaty of Trianon explicitly provides that "the property rights and interests of Hungarian nationals . . . situated in the territories which formed part of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy shall not be subject to retention or liquidation. . . . Such property rights and interests shall be restored to their owners freed from any measure of this kind." It is further provided that claims made by Hungarian nationals – by which is meant those who have retained their Hungarian citizenship —shall be submitted for adjudication to a mixed arbitral tribunal consisting of representatives of each of the disputing states, with a neutral chairman. In order to obtain redress for the grievances of its nationals in Transylvania, and in strict accordance with the provisions of the peace treaty, the Hungarian Government lodged an appeal with the

League of Nations, which ordered a mixed arbitral tribunal to be convened. Thereupon the Rumanian Government declared the tribunal "non-competent" to deal with the issue and obstructed the proceedings by withdrawing its member. In January, 1927, after a long discussion, the tribunal confirmed its competence, whereupon Rumania declared point-blank that it would not submit to its jurisdiction. In March Hungary asked the League to appoint a neutral judge in place of the Rumanian representative who had been withdrawn and that the question of the competence of the tribunal should be submitted to the International Court at The Hague. This request was opposed by Rumania and for some reason refused by the League of Nations, which appointed a committee with Sir Austen Chamberlain, the British foreign minister, as reporter to consider the matter.

When the League met in September, 1927, Sir Austen Chamberlain announced his decision, which was that the appeal to The Hague must be refused, and he laid down the doctrine that the Rumanian agrarian law superseded that country's treaty obligations and that a substitu e neutral judge could only be appointed to the arbitral tribunal on the condition that the Hungarians admitted that principle in advance. In other words, he consented to give the Hungarians a hearing on condition that the judgment went against them. In a speech which he delivered a few days later the British statesman sought to excuse his extraordinary decision by explaining

that it had been largely influenced by political considerations.

A friend who occupies a high position in European diplomacy, and who is in a position to know whereof he speaks, told me that what had really happened was this. Word was received by the Government at Bucharest that the committee's decision was likely to be adverse to Rumania. Thereupon Queen Marie, who is a very adroit and subtle person, wrote to her cousin King George, warning him that if Rumania was compelled to restore the Hungarian lands which it had confiscated, or pay the owners their full value for them, it would inevitably precipitate a revolution in that country, which, as the result of misgovernment and popular discontent, is on the verge of anarchy anyway. Though British sovereigns punctiliously refrain from meddling in politics, it may be assumed that King George communicated the queen's warning to Sir Austen Chamberlain, perhaps with the hint that it might be expedient for the committee to evade so dangerous an issue for the time being. As, even in constitutional England, a royal recommendation carries considerable weight, Sir Austen promptly pressed his foot down hard upon the soft pedal. Such is the "inside" story of the incident as it was told to me. You can take it for what it is worth.

No episode in the whole history of the League, not even the weak kneed vacillation displayed when Corfu was bombarded by the Italians, has done as

much as the Chamberlain decision to discredit the great tribunal at Geneva. If this statement is questioned, one has only to read the speeches made in the House of Lords in November, 1927, by Lord Newton, Lord Carson, Lord Buckmaster, and Lord Charnwood.

The truth of the matter is that the cards are stacked against Hungary at Geneva, a fact which, well known to the diplomatists, affords great glee to the Governments of the Little Entente nations, causes the opponents of the League to shrug their shoulders in cynical amusement, and to its sincere supporters brings discouragement and gloom. Though Sir Austen Chamberlain opposed the Hungarian claim on grounds of political expediency, perhaps in the sincere belief that by so doing he could best serve the cause of European peace if not of international justice, I am inclined to believe that he was not deaf to the counsels of France. Now a great number of French statesmen believe in their hearts that Hungary has a just case, and some of them have had the courage openly to espouse it, but the foreign policies of France are largely shaped by a permanent official, the political director of the Foreign Office, who is violently, almost venomously, anti-Hungarian and makes no attempt to conceal it. It was his insistence, I imagine, which caused the French foreign minister, Aristide Briand, to suggest to Baron Korányi, the Hungarian minister in Paris, that Hungary withdraw her appeal to the League of Nations in the in-

terests of European peace. It is extremely difficult to understand the attitude of the French Government, or of the British Government as represented by Sir Austen Chamberlain, for if their views prevail, and if it is admitted that the Rumanian Government has the legal right to violate her treaty agreements and to confiscate the property of foreigners, a precedent will thereby be established of which certain countries, notably Russia and Mexico, will not be slow to take advantage. The French and British Governments have been violent in denunciation of the soviets for confiscating the properties in Russia of their respective nationals, yet in almost the same breath they affirm the right of the Rumanians to do precisely the same thing. If the Rumanians are within their rights in confiscating the farmlands of Hungarians, why, it may pertinently be asked, are not the Bolsheviki justified in nationalizing French-owned industries, or the Mexicans in seizing British oil-wells? The cases are on all fours. The real gravity of Sir Austen Chamberlain's decision, however, lies in the fact that it is a stunning, if not a fatal, blow to the whole system of international arbitration, and, consequently, to the League of Nations.

It is my own conviction that the present situation in Rumania cannot last indefinitely. The late King Ferdinand may not have been a strong ruler, but he was a much more sagacious one than he was commonly credited with being, and he was held in genuine affection by the great mass of the Rumanian peo-

THE PALACE WITHOUT A KING

Its terraces command a superb view of the great river—not particularly blue—beyond which unrolls the panorama of Pest

ple, a fact which enabled him to exercise a moderating influence on the politicians. It was an evil day for Rumania when that influence was taken away, for since the king's death the country has been a battle-ground for rival factions, who seem willing to wreck it in order to achieve their selfish ends. It is common knowledge that many branches of the administration are rotten with corruption; there have been uncovered numerous scandals which have implicated some of the highest in the land; the kingdom seethes with unrest if not with actual sedition; the National Peasants' party is daily growing stronger and more self-assertive; public resentment at the harsh dictatorship of the Bratianu family is steadily increasing; and even the rigid censorship imposed by the Government has failed to stifle the murmurs of dissatisfaction.

Though the late dictator, Jon Bratianu, is supposed to have had the whip and reins firmly in his grasp, he is known to have met with opposition from the Council of Regency, which he himself created and was reputed to have held in contempt. This triumvirate, composed of the primate of Rumania, the chief justice of the court of cassation, and Prince Nicholas, the youthful uncle of the boy king, certainly could not be characterized as a strong combination. It is generally understood that Queen Marie was bitterly resentful toward Bratianu for having been excluded from the Council of Regency, and there are many who believe that, in order to

regain her power, she was prepared to make common cause with her exiled son, the profligate Carol, from whom, officially at least, she has been estranged. Carol is known to have been in communication with the leaders of the National Peasants' party, and was prepared with their support to defy the Bratianus and make a try for the throne. Those who are familiar with the highly involved political situation are convinced, however, that, rather than see Carol on the throne, Bratianu would have overthrown the monarchy and established a republic, with himself as president-dictator. Be this as it may, it can be said that almost any change in Rumania would be for the better. It is quite conceivable, moreover, that another form of government, particularly if the Peasants' party were in power, might see the wisdom of dealing more generously with the minorities and of taking steps to effect a reconciliation with Hungary.

Hungary is bordered on the north by the post-war republic of Czechoslovakia, which, under the terms of the treaty of Trianon, was permitted to annex virtually the whole of Hungarian Slovakia and Ruthenia, the former being inhabited by some 800,000 Hungarians. Though the condition of the Magyars in Czechoslovakia is immeasurably better than that of their brethren in Rumania, their lot is not a happy one and the minorities question is becoming increasingly acute.

In November, 1926, the Hungarian National Assembly became a thing of the past, being suc-

ceeded by a parliament consisting of two houses. The upper house, which takes the place of the former House of Magnates, is considerably more democratic in its composition than the old body. It consists of three members of the Palatinate, as the Hungarian branch of the Habsburg family is termed; thirty-eight nobles elected by their own family groups, who correspond to the old hereditary members; some fifty members elected by the county councils and municipalities; nineteen representatives of the Roman Catholic church, eleven of the Protestant, and two of the Jewish faith. The body also includes such dignitaries as the judges of the high court, the attorney-general, the governor of the national bank, the commander-in-chief of the army, and forty elected representatives of scientific institutions, art societies, agricultural bodies, and the stock exchange. Finally, there are forty members appointed for life on the Government's nomination. The lower house consists of 245 members, a comfortable majority being held by the Party of National Unity, of which Count Bethlen is the leader. It is significant of the state of political feeling in the country, which has not forgotten the terrors of the Commune, that the Socialists have succeeded in electing only fourteen members of the lower house.

In reviewing the list of members of the upper house one cannot but be struck by the fact that it is one of the few survivals of feudalism to be found in Europe. It is not fair, however, to judge it by west-

ern standards, for it is undoubtedly adapted to the conditions existing in Hungary, where the destinies of the peasants are still to a great extent in the benevolent keeping of the great landowners. And with this state of affairs the peasants appear quite content. The truth is that the Hungarians are not democrats and are the only people in Europe who have the nerve to say so.

It is extremely fortunate for Hungary that she has at the head of her government such a man as Admiral Horthy. He is certainly not a great statesman, and perhaps he cannot even be classed as a very brilliant man, but there is no question of his ability, sincerity, and strength of character. His Highness Nicholas Horthy de Nagybánya, governor of Hungary, to give him his full title and name, was born in 1868 at Szolnok in eastern Hungary, his family belonging to the lesser nobility. At the outbreak of the war he was appointed to command the cruiser *Novara* and particularly distinguished himself at the battle of Otranto, when, with three ships, he broke through the Italian cordon blockading the straits and, although severely wounded, remained on deck and continued the fight until he succeeded in bringing his squadron safely to its home port. For this exploit he was awarded the military cross of Maria Theresa, the highest reward for valor in the gift of the Austro-Hungarian Government.

He performed his greatest service to his country, however, by restoring order after the fall of the

Communist régime—a task which was done with no light hand by a sailor who regarded the spirit of discipline as more important than the praise of kings or the blame of politicians. But the gravest responsibilities which the regent was called upon to face were the two attempts of the late King Charles to regain the throne of Hungary. When in April, 1921, Charles came to Hungary unarmed, Horthy refused to obey his summons to hand over the reins of government.

When on his second venture, in October of the same year, Charles came with troops against the capital, the regent had no alternative but to fight him and, upon taking him prisoner, to surrender him to the allies. He found himself in the plight of having to decide between an allegiance sworn as admiral and privy councilor to his king, and the oath taken as regent to the National Assembly. That his course was dictated by the highest sense of honor and patriotism no one can justly deny. He had to lead his country through difficulties which few men in history have been called upon to face, and it is small wonder that in doing it he had to take drastic measures and has made many enemies.

With his clean-cut features, his erect, active figure, and his outspoken fashion of utterance, Horthy may be described as a typical sailor, a younger edition of the English Admiral Fisher or of our own Robley Evans, though with considerably more tact than either. Frank, simple, and direct in manner, he has

a profound contempt for the subterfuges of diplomats and the squabblings of politicians. He is devoted to sport, a fine shot, a brilliant tennis player, an accomplished horseman, and in private intercourse, as I discovered, he possesses to an exceptional degree the kingly faculty of making those with whom he converses feel "at home." But in official life he insists on a strict observance of the ceremonies which appertain to the head of a state that is still a monarchy. When the Hungarians seriously set about the business of finding an occupant for their empty throne they might go much farther and do much worse than to choose Nicholas Horthy.

The directing genius of Hungary's foreign affairs is the prime minister, Count Stephen Bethlen, who, by virtue of the length of time he has held office, is the dean of European premiers. The leader of the party in power and, consequently, the virtual dictator of the political situation, he possesses extraordinary political acumen. Though not a showy statesman, he has led his people through a period of desperately lean and discouraging years, but nevertheless a period of splendidly successful reconstruction. He has been the moderating and liberalizing influence in the administration and, though a member of the old nobility, he has gone as far in a democratic sense as the situation would permit. But his task has been a delicate and trying one, for Hungary is not a country which can be ruled with either too light or too strong a hand. While nothing is more

certain than that he will not permit his country to be led into another military adventure if he can prevent it, and while he has steadfastly refused to let Hungary enter into entangling alliances with other nations, it is equally certain that he will never rest in his efforts to recover its lost territories by every legitimate and peaceful means.

* * *

"The name Czechoslovakia," remarked a witty American diplomat with whom I was dining in Prague, "has cost that country an additional 1 per cent. on its foreign loans." The statement is doubtless an exaggeration, but there is a kernel of truth in it none the less, for there is no denying that to western ears the name has a barbaric sound and to most people suggests the Balkans. But, like so many things in post-war Europe, it is a political compromise, for the Czechs would have preferred to have called the new state Bohemia, which is the historic name of the portion they inhabit, but their partners, the Slovaks, insisted on being given a full share in the firm name. It was an unfortunate choice, however, if for no other reason than that it connotes a hybrid country, which of course it is, in spite of Czech assertions to the contrary.

The Czechoslovak Republic is one of the youngest countries in the world, having come into existence as an independent state on October 28, 1918. Situated in the geographical center of the European Con-

tinent, it forms the borderland between the German and the Slavonic worlds – or a bridge, if you wish to see it that way—the peoples which it embraces having played leading parts in the cultural development of Europe for centuries.

Ethnographically, the republic consists of five divisions: Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia, and Ruthenia, though the latter enjoys, at least in theory, a large measure of autonomy. It embraces, in short, the group of old Slavonic states which, though for centuries a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, preserved their nationality in spite of the fact that they had lost their political independence.

Though the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, from the flank of which Czechoslovakia was carved, was an ethnographic hodge-podge, the new republic itself is by no means a homogeneous nation. The figures of no two authorities agree, but it seems within the bounds of truth to assert that of the country's total population, which is somewhat in excess of fourteen millions, probably not more than three sevenths are Czechs and one seventh Slovaks. If these two peoples are really one, as the Czechs insist and the Slovaks deny, then they form a slight majority of the inhabitants. The balance of the population consists of Germans, who number about 3,125,000; between 740.000 and 800,000 Magyars. depending upon which set of statistics you accept; 462,000 Ruthenians, together with a considerable number of Poles, Jews. and various other races.

It is perfectly true that the Slavonic race is in an overwhelming majority in Czechoslovakia, but as it is divided into a number of peoples differing from one another in language, religion, culture, customs, and historical traditions—though these differences are often slight—it does not possess a national unity in the generally accepted sense of that term. For example, the Czechs and Slovaks speak languages which, though more or less similar, are nevertheless distinct tongues, the difference being bridged by the transitional dialects of Moravia. The Ruthenians—the name, which is a form of the word "Russian," is applied to those of the Little Russians who were Austrian subjects--speak the language of the Ukraine. In western Bohemia and in Silesia the predominant language is German. To still further complicate the linguistic problem, there are numerous German-speaking enclaves situated in purely Czech districts. It might be mentioned, parenthetically, that the Czech language is greatly indebted to John Hus, whose best and most original works were written in the language of his country. It was the great Bohemian reformer who introduced the system of so-called diacritic marks—such as c, u, y—for he realized that it was quite impossible to reproduce in Latin characters some of the sounds peculiar to Slav tongues. After attempting to decipher some of the signs written in the language perfected by Hus it is easy to understand why they burned him.

The Czechs, who are not a particularly religious

people, are nominally Roman Catholics, and so are most of the Slovaks, but there are also a good many Protestants in Slovakia, while the Ruthenians belong to the Uniate church, which is closely allied to the Greek communion. According to the latest census, more than 5 per cent. of the inhabitants of Czechoslovakia have no religion. Culturally, a deep gulf separates the Czechs from the Slovaks and Ruthenians, the well-educated, highly intelligent natives of Bohemia having little in common with the stolid, slow-thinking Slovak peasants or with the even less advanced Ruthenians. Whatever their differences, however, whether linguistic, religious, or cultural, the fact remains that the Czechs of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, and the Slovaks of Slovakia comprise branches of the same Slav nation.

The Czechs appear to have made themselves masters of Bohemia as early as the fifth century, and for upward of twelve hundred years that country remained a Czech kingdom. Its independence was brought to a temporary end, however, on November 8, 1620, when the armies of the Holy Roman Empire crushed the Bohemian forces at the battle of the White Mountain. The conquest of Bohemia, which was the first episode in the Thirty Years' War, was precipitated when the Protestant nobles of Bohemia, roused by the attempts of the Roman Catholic church to recover its ancient hold over the country, refused to elect the Archduke Ferdinand to the va-

cant throne and offered it instead to the Elector Frederick. Thereupon the powerful Maximilian of Bavaria joined his forces to those of Ferdinand, who had meanwhile become emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and the latter also received aid from Spain, Poland, and several of the Italian states. This overwhelming array invaded Bohemia, advanced upon Prague, and carried by storm the fortified position on the plateau known as the Bila Hora, or White Mountain, where the Bohemians made their final stand.

Because this battle marked an epoch in the history of Bohemia it is as frequently referred to in that country as the battle of Lexington is in the United States, and in the events which immediately succeeded it are to be found the reasons for many of the policies pursued by the Czechoslovak Government. A period of three hundred years, lacking only a few months, intervened between the fall of the Bohemian kingdom and the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic—a sufficiently ample space of time, it would seem, to permit of ancient grudges and historic hatreds being forgotten—yet the modern Czechs speak of those long-past events as though they had happened yesterday. Perhaps it is because, all down the centuries between, they have nursed their wrath to keep it warm.

No sooner had Ferdinand made himself master of the country than he ordered the execution of the principal Bohemian leaders and the wholesale con-

fiscation of the lands of all who had in any way opposed him. Almost the entire ancient nobility of Bohemia was driven into exile, and adventurers from all countries, mostly men who had served in the imperial armies, shared the spoils. This explains why the vast majority of the great estates in Bohemia are to-day in the possession of families bearing German, Polish, Spanish, and even Italian names, and it also explains, in some measure at least, why the Czechs are seeking to deprive those families of their lands.

Gradually all those who refused to accept the creed of the church of Rome were expelled from Bohemia, and by the employment of cruelties which rivaled those of the Inquisition, Catholicism was firmly reëstablished in the land. The country was forced to accept a new constitution which made the Bohemian crown hereditary in the house of Habsburg, the Diet was deprived of all legislative power, and it was decreed that the German language should be placed on an equality with the Czech in all the government offices and law courts of the kingdom. This had indeed become a necessity, since, in consequence of the vast number of confiscations, the greater part of the land was in the hands of foreigners to whom the national language was unknown. Though these enactments left to Bohemia a certain measure of autonomy, the country gradually lost its ndividuality, its history from this moment until the outbreak of the World War being but a part of the

history of Austria, whose emperors were automatically also Bohemian kings.

Though the Czech nation, as I have shown, was deprived of its independence for three hundred years, it never abandoned the hope of eventually recovering it, a hope which the Austrians could never completely extinguish in spite of their systematic attempts to effectually Germanize the country. The Czechs were quick to realize, therefore, that the outcome of the World War would have a decisive effect upon their future. By their traditions, their sympathies, and their whole political outlook the Czechs were on the side of western European democracy and against the central autocracies for whom they were called upon to fight. Owing to the presence of great numbers of German and Austro-Hungarian troops on Czech territory, however, open protest or revolution was obviously impossible, for either would have been suppressed with a ruthless hand. The opposition of the Czechs accordingly took the form of passive resistance, the desertion to the allies of considerable numbers of Czech troops when opportunity offered, and the formation of secret societies in preparation for the decisive moment. The brunt of the revolutionary movement was, however, borne by the political exiles, who, having escaped abroad at the beginning of the war, began to carry on in the allied and neutral countries an extensive propaganda aimed at achieving independence for the Czech and Slovak lands.

The case of the Slovaks was somewhat different from that of the Czechs. Though they have lived in the region bearing their name, which until 1918 comprised the northern counties of Hungary, since the fifth century, they were not animated by the traditions which inspired the Czechs, for, save for two brief interludes, they have always been under foreign domination. From the seventh to the tenth century they were subject to the Avars and the Franks, forming part of Great Moravia until in 907 that kingdom was conquered by the Magyars, under whose rule the Slovaks remained for a thousand years. It might be supposed that after such a length of time the Slovaks would have become thoroughly Magyarized, but such was not the case. For the Slovaks, who are a stubborn folk, sullenly resented the attitude of their Magyar masters, who always treated them as an inferior race and did their utmost to suppress the Slovak nationality in every way.

When the temperamental and cultural differences of the two peoples are taken into consideration, it is not surprising that, after the first flush of enthusiasm, friction should have arisen between the Czechs and the Slovaks. There is, in fact, a striking similarity between the political situation which has arisen in Czechoslovakia and that which exists in another composite Slav state, Yugoslavia, where the Croats and Slovenes are complaining bitterly of oppression by the Serb majority. The Czechs, an energetic, ambitious, progressive, and aggressive people, who

outnumber the Slovaks three to one, look with condescension, if not contempt, on their less literate, slower-thinking, more easy-going partners, whom, if the truth be known, they regard as immensely inferior to themselves.

At Pittsburgh, addressing a convention composed of Slovaks residing in the United States, Masaryk solemnly promised that if they would unite with the Czechs and, when a peace conference was called, join with the latter in a demand for independence, he, as the president of the Czech National Council, would guarantee the Slovaks complete autonomy within the proposed state, with a constitution and a parliament of their own. This promise he reiterated in writing. There is little evidence, however, that the Slovaks who attended the Pittsburgh meeting were other than self-appointed delegates, or that they were authorized to speak for their compatriots either in the United States or at home. Yet, at the Peace Conference in Paris, when the question of forming a Czechoslovak state came up for discussion, and it was proposed that a plebiscite should be taken, Masaryk produced this agreement as proof that the whole Slovak people were in favor of union. When, however, certain Slovaks demanded that the wishes of the Slovak nation be determined by plebiscite, Masaryk told them that the pledges contained in the Pittsburgh document were not binding, as it had been signed on a public holiday. Later in the same year, at Turciansky St. Martin, another

equally astute politician, Hlinka by name, induced some of his Slovak supporters to issue a similar declaration, the idea being to convince the still hesitant allies that both American and European Slovaks were in favor of union with the Czechs; but in a statement issued by the Slovak nationalists in 1922 it was pointed out that neither the Pittsburgh nor the Turciansky St. Martin signatories possessed the slightest authority to speak for the people of Slovakia as a whole.

Though it is extremely difficult to learn the true facts of so involved a situation by a few weeks' stay in a country, particularly when one does not speak that country's language, I left Czechoslovakia with the impression that there is a real basis for the frequently repeated assertions that there is serious disaffection among the Slovaks and that the separatist movement among them is steadily gaining ground. Certain it is that they are profoundly discontented with things as they are at present, but whether a plebiscite would show, as certain observers have claimed, that the majority of Slovaks desire reunion with Hungary, is open to question.

Leaving aside the question of whether they were or were not jockeyed into a union with the Czechs, the chief complaint of the Slovaks, so far as I have been able to determine, is that the Czechs are subjecting them to both political oppression and systematic economic exploitation. Since the establishment of the republic, if the Slovaks are to be

FOUR-IN-HANDS AT BABOLNA

We were driven to the round-up in vehicles like American buckboards, each drawn by four white stallions

believed, upward of a million Czech officials, tradesmen, and laborers have settled in Slovakia, thereby making it that much more difficult for the less efficient Slovaks to earn a living. It is also pointed out that a number of Slovak industries, such as the explosives factory at Bratislava and the government mint at Kremnica, have been removed to Bohemia, thereby throwing large numbers of Slovaks out of work. To this the Government replies that the plants in question were too near the frontier and were moved into the interior of the country for purely strategic reasons.

I also heard complaints to the effect that the Czechs were the sole beneficiaries of the Land Reform Act, and that, as a result of the unfair manner in which it has been executed, thousands of Slovak laborers are without employment; that Czech industrial, commercial, and banking firms have been accorded privileges denied to Slovak business houses; and that concessions for exploiting the state domains have been granted mainly, if not exclusively, to Czechs. Just how much justification there is for these charges I have been unable to determine to my own satisfaction. I have reason to believe, however, that there is considerable ground for the complaint that Czechs are given systematic preference in the various forms of government employment, even in Slovakia itself. Though it is undeniable that the Czechs, as a whole, are better educated and far more efficient than the Slovaks, there are among

the latter many men who could quite safely be intrusted with administrative duties, but they do not appear to be very numerous in the government bureaus. This policy, if it is a policy, is pursued, I suppose, in order to keep the administration in Czech hands.

It is obviously undesirable for a country to have two languages—though the system seems to work smoothly enough in Belgium, where both French and Flemish are officially used—but it would appear that the Czechs have quite needlessly antagonized the Slovaks by attempting to coerce the latter into using the Czech language. Slovak children are being compelled to learn Czech, to which I can see no great objection; passports and other official documents are now almost invariably written in the official language, which seems reasonable; but I see no necessity for insisting that the sign-posts and street names in Slovak territory shall be in Czech, nor is there the shadow of an excuse for the prohibition of the Slovak national anthem. The Slovak press is under a rigid censorship, letters and printed matter entering Slovakia are liable to censorship and confiscation, and it is not wholly wise for a Slovak to insist on his right, as guaranteed by the constitution, to free speech.

Perhaps the most foolish thing the Czechs have done, however, is their persecution, for that is what it amounts to, of the Roman Catholic church in Slovakia, where various measures, including confisca-

tion of its property, have been taken to diminish the church's power and influence. A considerable number of the leading Czechs are frankly irreligious and nearly all of them are violently opposed to anything which smacks of clericalism—in which respects their theories tend toward communism—whereas the vast majority of the Slovaks are devout churchmen, and it seems folly to meddle with their religion. In the words of Talleyrand, "It is worse than a crime; it is a mistake."

In discussing the differences between the Czechs and the Slovaks it is easy to be an alarmist, but, provided the Czechs adopt a more conciliatory attitude toward their partners, I see no real reason for alarm. The Slovaks undoubtedly have numerous grounds for their complaints, and, as they are a stubborn and determined people, the Czechs would do well to heed them. I do not believe that there is any large element among the Slovaks which seriously desires reunion with Hungary, and they assuredly must realize that a nation of only two millions of people could not go it alone. If the Czechs will put an end to the existing bitterness by freely conceding to the Slovaks those rights as equal partners which they were promised by the agreement of Pittsburgh and which are guaranteed them by the constitution, I see no reason why the Czechoslovak Republic should not continue as a going and prosperous concern.

The Czechs and Slovaks are so closely related—

they represent two branches of the same Slav race—and, despite their numerous differences, have so much in common, that their union, far from being artificial, is a perfectly natural and logical one. Ruthenia, which joined the republic later on, is in a somewhat different category from the other divisions, for it enjoys a large measure of autonomy and is bound to Czechoslovakia proper by very loose ties. There are also upward of three million Austro-Germans in the country—they outnumber the Slovaks in the proportion of three to two—but they dwell for the most part in Bohemia, where they are so interspersed with the Czech population that it would have been humanly impossible to have delimited a frontier which would have separated the two races even approximately. Though the Germans of Bohemia remember with regret the old days when they were masters of the land, and though they indulge in chronic complaints about Czech oppression, they are amply able to look after their own interests, and, so far as I could observe, the two races are getting along together tolerably well. I imagine, indeed, that if the Germans were given their choice between remaining citizens of the vigorous young Czechoslovak Republic or of being restored to an Austria that is now weak and helpless, most of them would vote to continue as they are. They might think quite differently, however, were Austria to become a part of the German Reich, as in time it almost certainly will.

But the Magyars of Czechoslovakia, of whom there are probably not far from 800,000, are in an entirely different position, for they form a compact group along the southern borders of the new state, to which they were annexed against their will and to which they are attached by none of the motives of expediency or self-interest which animate the Bohemian Germans. The bulk of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia are in the "black lands," an extremely rich agricultural region lying along the banks of the Danube where that river forms a natural frontier between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The Czech argument is similar to that of Italy regarding the Brenner Pass, or England's with respect to Gibraltar—namely, that it is a military necessity; though in agreeing to it the peace delegates were compelled to jettison the principle of self-determination which they had so loudly proclaimed. It was generally understood at the time that the action of the treaty-makers in permitting Czechoslovakia to annex this compact mass of Hungarians was due to the insistence of Marshal Foch and the French general staff, who, with that lack of vision which so frequently characterizes professional military men, declared that the cause of European tranquillity would be better served by giving the Czechoslovaks a strong military frontier than by permitting a few hundred thousand peasants to remain Hungarian.

The injustice of the transaction was tacitly admitted by the allies at the signing of the treaty of

Trianon in a covering letter written by the French premier, M. Millerand, which promised that the frontiers as laid down should, if necessary, be revised. Even more significant is the testimony of Mr. Lloyd George, war-time premier of Great Britain, who, writing in September, 1927, in regard to the treaties with the central powers, said: "I can state emphatically that their authors never claimed for them such a degree of perfection that they held them to be immutable. . . . We all distinctly contemplated the possibility of certain clauses and provisions of the treaties themselves being made the subject of discussion, adjudication and possible revision by the great tribunal set up in the first clause of these treaties—the League of Nations."

Though the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia have fared far better than their brethren under Rnmanian rule, though they have escaped the brutalities practised on the Magyars of Transylvania, their condition is not a happy one. Racial passions and nationalistic ambitions have been roused to such a pitch, however, the air is so filled with charges and counter-charges, with accusations and denials, that it is almost impossible to determine the facts of the situation. The extremist point of view has been voiced by Lord Rothermere, the English newspaper publisher, who, in violently championing the Hungarian cause, states that the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia "have been subject to oppression by the side of which the Germanization of Alsace-Lorraine

pales into insignificance." A much more temperate opinion is expressed by Mr. Donald Curry, the Vienna correspondent of the "Christian Science Monitor," one of the best-informed men in Europe on the Danubian question, who says: "As far as can be gathered, the Czechs probably committed some mistakes in their dealings with the Hungarian minority, but on the whole these Hungarians are not nearly as dissatisfied with their position as certain interests would have the world believe." The truth is probably to be found somewhere between these radically opposed points of view.

The constitution of Czechoslovakia expressly guarantees all citizens of the new state full equality before the law and equal civil and political rights, whatever be their race, origin, language, or religion, together with full personal freedom, inviolability of domestic rights and of the mails, freedom of the press, the right of free assembly and association, and of the expression of opinion by word, writing, or print, and prohibits every manner of forcible denationalization. Yet these constitutional guarantees, many of them at least, are honored more frequently in the breach than in the observance.

The principal and perhaps the most vital grievance put forward by the Magyar residents of Slovakia—there are few Magyars in Bohemia—concerns their rights to citizenship, which they are guaranteed by the treaty of Trianon, provided they can prove that they enjoyed a similar status under

the Hungarian régime. In other words, those residents in the annexed territories who were Hungarian citizens at the time of the annexation are presumed to have the right, if they so elect, automatically to become citizens of the Czechoslovak state.

Under the Hungarian law any man who had lived in any parish for four years and had contributed to its taxes for the same period secured automatically the status of citizen, and therefore the right to vote. The Czechs have ruled, however, that all who had not acquired their citizenship prior to January 1, 1910, are required to take out fresh naturalization papers. Furthermore, the parish authorities—who are in nearly all cases Czechs or Slovaks—must give their official approval before the citizenship of any Hungarian becomes valid. As a consequence of this arbitrary ruling, there are tens of thousands of Hungarians in Slovakia and Ruthenia, including several members of Parliament, who possess no naturalization papers and have been able to obtain none. The unwisdom and unfairness of granting such veto power to parish councils, the majority of whose members are Slovaks, will be obvious when it is remembered that the Slovaks have a bitter hatred for the Magyars and eagerly seize upon this means of satisfying ancient grudges and paying off old scores.

But this is only one of the expedients employed by the Czechoslovak majority to reduce the number of Magyar votes, for Parliament has passed a law

The thousand years old undivided Hungary

Area before Trianon 325.411 □ km
Inhabitants 20.886.487

Area after Trianon 91.243 □ km
Inhabitants 7.515.886

Cecho-Slovaquia
Area : 62.937
Inhabitants: 3575.685
Austria
Area: 4.926
Inhabitants: 358.499
Yugoslavia
Area: 63.497 Inhabitants: 4,121.167
Rumania
Area: 102.787
Inhabitants: 5,265.444
Sopron
BUDAPEST
Debrecen
Szeged
Pécs

which provides that the Magyars shall be permitted full enjoyment of their minority rights only in those districts in which they constitute at least 20 per cent. of the inhabitants. This ingenuously evades the obligations imposed upon Czechoslovakia by the peace treaties by asserting that a minority is not a minority if it forms less than one fifth of the total local population. This has resulted, as it was obviously intended to do, in the disfranchisement of a considerable proportion of the Magyar electorate and the closing of a large number of Magyar schools, clubs, theaters, and cultural associations. Mr. Dudley Heathcote, who was sent to Czechoslovakia by the "Daily Mail" to investigate the situation, places the number of Magyars who have thus been deprived of their cultural privileges at 350,000, but the evidence of other observers suggests that this figure is considerably too high. He backs his assertion, however, by the statement that the number of Magyar primary schools in the annexed territory has fallen from 2223 to just over 700, the number of secondary schools from 95 to 20, and the technical colleges and gymnasia from 67 to 10. The most reliable statistics obtainable seem to bear out, though only in part, the contentions of the Magyars that they are not allowed to have the full quota of educational institutions to which they are entitled. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica the Magyars in Czechoslovakia comprise approximately 5½ per cent. of the total population. According to the Statesman's Year

Book for 1927, 5.8 per cent. of the primary schools are Magyar—a fair proportion—but 0.5 per cent. of the secondary schools are Magyar, and less than 3 per cent. of the gymnasia and technical institutions.

Mr. Heathcote also points out that the Government has found another weapon for employment against the Magyars in an obscure clause of the constitution—"a joker" it would be called in America—which provides that even the fundamental right possessed by every Czechoslovak citizen, which entitles him to use any language he chooses, whether in private life, business intercourse, or in his religious devotions, can be taken away arbitrarily "for higher reasons of state."

As a minor example of the oppressive methods employed by the Czechoslovak Government, I might mention that Hungarians living in Slovakia are not permitted to receive Hungarian newspapers, which are confiscated by the postal authorities, this breach of the constitution being based on the plea that they might contain attacks on the Czechoslovak administration. President Masaryk and Foreign Minister Benès, with both of whom I discussed the matter, excused it by explaining that it was a measure taken by the police of Slovakia, which is jealous of its autonomous rights, and that consequently the Central Government could not interfere.

The Hungarians in Czechoslovakia will tell you that their letters are subject to censorship and sometimes to confiscation, and that it is safer to send

them by registered post or, better still, by hand. This charge was substantiated to some extent by my own experience, for of three letters which I sent from Germany to a Hungarian friend in Slovakia, two were delayed for over a fortnight and the third was not delivered at all. All titles of nobility were abolished by the constitution, but it seems rather petty for the postal officials to refuse to deliver letters because they happen to be addressed to princes, dukes, or counts. An example of this pettiness occurred when we were staying in Prague. A certain Count X came to call upon my daughter, but the manager of the hotel refused to send up his name until he had changed the prefix to "Mister."

The Government at Prague is charged with the toleration, if not the actual instigation, of numerous other acts of oppression, certain of which I have good reason to believe are true, while others are undoubtedly exaggerations. Certainly it is no exaggeration, however, to say that by no elasticity of language can Czechoslovakia be described as a free country in the sense in which the Anglo-Saxon peoples understand that term, for she not only employs wholly unjustifiable measures of repression toward the minorities, but forbids all discussion of the situation in her press, while her police seem to have copied the old czarist policy of espionage, censorship, and intimidation.

It was apparent from the outset that the German nobles of Bohemia and the Hungarian magnates of

Slovakia, who between them almost controlled the land, were not likely to acquiesce quietly in Czechoslovak rule. In the interests of Czechoslovakia, therefore, their powers of resistance to the new order of things must be diminished, they must cease to be great landowners. Accordingly, with the double-barreled object of reducing them to the position of petty proprietors and of satisfying the demands of the land-hungry peasants, Czechoslovakia, like Rumania, early adopted a drastic policy of land expropriation.

Now there can be no denying that social and economic conditions in the new republic made some system of land reform a crying necessity. Prior to the war most of the land was in the hands of the large proprietors, while the great mass of the peasants had little, if anything, to afford them a living. More than one quarter of all Bohemia was owned by less than 2 per cent. of the landowners. Nearly one third of the soil of Moravia was owned by less than 2 per cent. of the landowners. Matters were even worse in Slovakia, where about a thousand persons owned nearly half of the entire country.

During a conversation with Dr. Eduard Benès, the exceedingly able statesman who is Czechoslovakia's minister of foreign affairs, I obtained a graphic idea of the miseries suffered by the peasants as a result of this pernicious system.

"My parents," said Dr. Benès, "were poor peasants, and I was one of a large family of children. We

were desperately poor. We lived in a miserable hut in the village of Kozlany, my father supporting us by tilling a small piece of leased ground. And our neighbors were no better off than we were. Life would have been more endurable for us, however, if we could have bought the land we lived on, instead of having to pay out in rent nearly everything we earned. But, though the nobleman who was our landlord owned thousands of hectares, a large portion of the estate being preserved for shooting, he refused to sell a foot of soil to relieve the misery of the people at his gates."

It will be seen, therefore, that a very real need existed for the act passed in April, 1919, which authorized the state to take over for partition and distribution estates exceeding 150 hectares (about 370 acres) of arable land, or 250 hectares of land of any other category. Though the ostensible aim of the law was to provide the great mass of the people with land, thereby insuring their support of the administration, there can be no doubt that its framers were actuated by an ulterior motive—by the determination to weaken the power of the German and Hungarian proprietors by transferring the titles in large measure to Czechoslovaks. If, as a result of the expropriation of their lands, the Germans and Hungarians should be forced to leave the country, well and good—they were not wanted and had no business there anyway.

The Czech point of view was summed up by an

official of the Foreign Office with whom I discussed the question while I was in Prague. "We are only taking back what is rightfully ours," he said. "Most of the land which we are expropriating originally belonged to the Czechs, and was taken from them by the Austrian invaders after the battle of the White Mountain." Historically, this argument is sound, but the battle of the White Mountain, as I have remarked earlier in this chapter, was fought three hundred years ago, which is quite a length of time to have held title to property, and in most countries would make the title valid. Repeated attempts have been made by the Indians to obtain the restoration of the lands which were taken from them by American settlers in the seventeenth century and later, but I can recall no case where the courts have decided in their favor. Nor can the historical argument be put forward to support the expropriation of lands which were acquired in very recent years and by perfectly legitimate purchase. I know of one large property which was purchased only a few years ago, since when its owner has spent large sums in developing it scientifically and putting it on a paying basis, yet under the law he receives no more consideration than those of his neighbors whose lands have passed down to them from marauding ancestors of the Middle Ages.

Even if the Land Reform Act had been carried out intelligently and with scrupulous honesty it would have worked great hardships on the proprietors, but

the law as interpreted and enforced at present is neither just in its provisions nor is it being honestly executed.

In the first place, the compensation allowed the owners has been so insignificant as to amount to virtual confiscation. Most fair-minded Czechs admit this, but excuse it on the ground that, were the owners paid the full value, or anywhere near the full value, of their land it would cripple the country financially.

The law provides that indemnification for expropriated land shall be based on its average value between 1913 and 1915. On the face of it, that sounds very fair. But it must be remembered that farming land has increased in value enormously since the war. Proof of this is found in the fact that the Czechoslovak Government sells the land to the peasants for prices from 50 to 75 per cent. in excess of what it paid the owners for it, and though this difference is supposed to cover the costs of subdivision and sale on the easy-payment plan, the Government nevertheless makes a very tidy profit on each transaction. Moreover, the Government pays for the land in depreciated Czechoslovak crowns, which at present are worth only about one seventh of their par value. And, finally, the Government need not necessarily pay the owner in cash at all, even in this depreciated currency, but may give him state bonds bearing interest as from 3 to 4 per cent., which is greatly below the rate prevailing in Czechoslovakia, where 8 per cent. is frequently paid on commercial loans.

But let me make the situation clearer by a hypothetical example, as the lawyers say. An imaginary Hungarian—we will call him Michael Horthobagy—who was placed under Czechoslovak rule by the treaty of Trianon, has a property of 300 hectares devoted to the growing of sugar-beets. We will assume, for the sake of argument, that, being highly cultivated land, it would bring in the open market 150,000 gold crowns, or approximately $30,000. But, under the law, Horthobagy is permitted to retain only 150 hectares, the Government expropriating the rest. The 150 hectares taken over by the state are actually worth 75,000 gold crowns – $15,000. For purposes of expropriation, however, the property is assessed not on its present value but on its average value during the 1913-15 period, at say, 50,000 gold crowns, or about $10,000. Though much less than the price which Hortobagy could probably obtain in the open market, this in not a sum to be despised. But —and here is the joker—instead of paying the 50,000 crowns in gold, the Government pays them in paper (the paper crown, as I have stated, being worth only about one seventh of the gold crown), so that the unfortunate Hortobagy receives for property presumably worth $15,000 the equivalent of $1426. The Government defends this injustice—first, by asserting that its financial condition does not permit of its paying a higher rate for expropriated land; second, by the reminder that the paper crown, though greatly depreciated, is still the legal

currency of Czechoslovakia; and, third, by pointing out that if the late owner holds his paper crowns they may appreciate as the country's financial condition improves. But there is likewise the possibility that they may depreciate still more.

Needless to say, the Government recognizes the wisdom of paying for the land which it expropriates in cash, that is to say, in depreciated paper, but under the law it can, if it sees fit, pay Horthobagy in non-transferable state bonds bearing 4 per cent. interest, in which case he would receive the munificent sum of $57.04 a year in exchange for property which yielded him, it is fair to assume, in the neighborhood of $1000 per annum.

Stripped of the high sounding verbiage with which it has been camouflaged, that is what expropriation, as practised in Czechoslovakia, means. Is it to be wondered at that the landowners feel that they are being made the victims of a deliberate policy of spoliation which has few counterparts in modern times? It may be true, as frequently stated, that most of proprietors are rich men, or at any rate well-to-do ones, and hence deserve no sympathy, but that is no reason for denying them a square deal.

President Masaryk, who I have been told, looks on the land reform scheme as it is being applied with some misgivings, discussed the question with me very candidly.

"It would be idle to deny," he said, "that the expropriation measures have worked numerous hard-

ships on individual proprietors. But what could we do? We were confronted by a great national necessity. The peasants demanded the land, which they unquestionably needed, and the Government pledged itself to give it to them. But Czechoslovakia is poor —it has need for five dollars where it spends one— and it simply cannot afford a higher rate of compensation than it is paying. Unfortunately, our currency is greatly depreciated, and those whose lands are taken suffer accordingly, but there is always the possibility that it may recover, perhaps return in time to par, in which case the proprietors would receive adequate compensation for their lands."

My own feeling is that the greatest reproach to the Czechoslovak Government lies not in its adoption of the principle of expropriation, for some such measure was doubtless inevitable, or even in the inadequacy of the compensation (the Governments of the Baltic states expropriated the lands of the great proprietors without making them any compensation whatever), but rather in the manner in which the law is being administered. The work of dividing the estates has been intrusted to petty local officials, many of whom are notoriously corrupt, some of whom have been proved guilty of favoring relatives, friends, and political supporters, while others have used their power to gratify personal grudges and ancient enmities. I heard of several instances where those intrusted with the execution of the law had been bought off by the proprietors, but, as one of the

latter remarked, "One can't keep on buying these fellows off forever."

Though it is common knowledge that the Land Office is mismanaged, if nothing worse, though tales of fraud and bribery are repeated everywhere, no financial reports of the expropriations have ever been made public, in spite of repeated appeals to the Government to produce them. The opposition asserts that so many public men and politicians would be involved in the resultant disclosures that the Government does not dare to make them. Indeed, if only a fraction of the stories which were told me about these land deals is true, the Czechoslovak Government is guilty of tolerating frauds compared with which the Teapot Dome and Indian lands scandals are insignificant.

From what I have said in the foregoing pages it will be seen that running through the Czechoslovak body politic is a very distinct strain of socialism, which at times verges perilously on communism. In fact, there are twenty-one avowed Communists in the Czechoslovak Senate and forty-one in the Chamber of Deputies, to say nothing of the various brands of Socialists who, though not Reds, might certainly be classified as pinks. This is not at all surprising in a peasant country like Czechoslovakia, whose people have been embittered by centuries of foreign oppression, nor do I see in the fact anything which is particularly alarming, for Masaryk, Benès, and most of the other leaders are sane and able men, very far

from being demagogues or extremists, and the Czechoslovaks themselves are at bottom a steady, level-headed race.

The young republic is enormously rich in forests, mines, agricultural resources, and industrial enterprises; its people are as progressive and energetic as any on the continent; the larger towns have the bustling, business-like atmosphere of American cities; and, despite the mistakes that it has made, I am convinced that the Government is making a sincere attempt to give the country a decent administration. Owing to the unsettled political state of the Continent generally, I look askance on all European loans, but, if one is willing to take a chance, I should say that of all the countries of eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia was the best risk.

The main element of risk—and I do not claim that it is a great one—lies in the selfishness displayed by the Czechs of Bohemia in their relations with the Slovaks and in the unconciliatory attitude they have displayed toward the Hungarians. The question of the relations between the Czechs and their Slovak partners is, however, a purely domestic one, and, given time, plus forbearance on both sides, it will, I imagine, eventually work itself out to their mutual satisfaction.

The problem presented by the Hungarian minority is a far more serious one. Even if a sincere attempt is made to conciliate these people, I do not believe that they can ever be assimilated success-

fully, for they are of a wholly different breed and have different traditions. Moreover, they are fully as patriotic as the Czechs themselves. Despite all efforts to denationalize them, they remain passionately devoted to the country from which they were torn.

This being so, they promise to remain a thorn in the side of Czechoslovakia, a source of trouble and of danger. Furthermore, now that the hatreds engendered by the war are dying down, public opinion everywhere is coming to recognize the fundamental injustice and unwisdom of imposing an alien yoke on any people, or fraction of a people, against their will, particularly when that people has some justification for claiming that it is being subjected to persecution and oppression.

By maintaining its rule over the former Hungarian areas along the north bank of the Danube, where the Magyar population forms an almost solid block, Czechoslovakia assures itself of a strong military frontier—though our ideas of what constitutes a defensible frontier must be radically revised in these days of long-range guns and three-hundred-miles-an-hour airplanes—and it also retains control of some useful railways and valuable coal mines. But are military frontiers and railways and coal mines actually worth what it costs in armies and anxieties to hold them? That is a question which merits the most serious consideration.

Yet on this subject the Czechs have thus far stubbornly refused to listen to reason, even when the

arguments for a change in their attitude have been advanced by their friends. Their frontiers were fixed at the Trianon for all time, they assert, and in their refusal to consider any revision they are adamant. Their uncompromising attitude is doubtless attributable to the fact that just at present they are considerably "above themselves." But such a frame of mind is hardly surprising in a people who obtained their independence so recently, so suddenly, almost without a blow, who have had good fortune literally thrust upon them.

Nothing is farther from my desire than to make an offensive comparison, but the intransigent attitude of the Bohemian Czechs calls to mind a young American whom I encountered some years ago in a Paris restaurant. He had recently come into a fortune which, together with the fact that he was unaccustomed to champagne, led him to show a marked lack of consideration for the other diners.

"Quiet down, Bill," one of his companiens adjured him. "You're making altogether too much noise. You can't run this place, you know. The people here won't stand for it."

"To hell with them!" the youngster retorted, belligerently. "I'm sitting on top of the world. I've got money and I've got a pull and I'm ready to fight any one who objects to my enjoying myself So let's open another bottle. Come on, now! Be a bohemian!"

* * *

THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

No one, I suppose, believes that the present situation in the valley of the Danube can endure, that the "settlement" made at the Trianon will last very long. It is true that Hungary is dismembered, disarmed, encircled by powerful enemies—but she is potentially dangerous to the peace of the world nevertheless. A nation with a grievance is always a source of danger, particularly if its grievance is justified. The lessons of history cannot safely be ignored. Her oppression of subject peoples cost Spain an empire. Russia's repressive measures in Poland precipitated a whole series of bloody revolutions. Germany's annexation of Alsace-Lorraine made *La Revanche* a French hope and watchword for half a century. Austria's oppression of her Italian minorities caused Italy to break the Triple Alliance and enter the war on the side of the allies. Turkey's treatment of the Greeks and Armenians aroused world-wide indignation. Yet now, after a war which was waged to abolish such abuses, two nations which gave but negligible aid to the allied cause have been permitted to create *terrae irredentae* within their borders and thereby lay the foundations for another war.

The more carefully the facts of the situation are studied the plainer it appears that in the near future the map of central Europe must be redrawn. The danger is that if this is delayed too long the redrawing will be done with the bayonet instead of with the pen. Yet I have tried to make it amply clear that, in

my opinion, nothing is farther from the intention of the Hungarian Government than to itself precipitate another conflict. Under the stern supervision of Admiral Horthy and Count Bethlen, Hungary has gotten down to hard work; thanks to the sound advice of an American, Mr. Jeremiah Smith, she has been amazingly successful in rehabilitating her finances and putting her house in order. None of the succession states can say as much.

But it is entirely conceivable that a situation might arise which would force the Government to yield to popular opinion. Or, which is more likely, events might so shape themselves that Hungary, merely by remaining neutral, could command her own price, for she occupies a position of enormous strategic importance at the crossroads of Europe. A war between Italy and Yugoslavia, a revolution in Rumania, a Russian attempt to regain Bessarabia, a split between Czechs and Slovaks, a clash in Albania, another Communist rising in Austria—any of these may come suddenly, at any moment, and any of them might give Hungary her chance.

I have it on the word of men who are exceptionally well informed—foreign military observers for the most part—that there is no justification for the assertions so frequently made by the Governments of the Little Entente that Hungary is secretly preparing for another war and consequently needs close watching. Such an assertion in nonsensical on the face of it. As a matter of fact, owing to dissatisfaction with

the prescribed term of enlistment—all recruits must consent to serve for a minimum period of twelve consecutive years—Hungary has experienced considerable difficulty in keeping her military establishment up to the strength permitted her under the treaty—35,000 men. Furthermore, she has no organized reserves, no heavy artillery, indeed, little artillery of any description, no tanks, no airplanes. Yet, in order to protect themselves against this defenseless state, smaller in area than Indiana and smaller than New York in population, the Little Entente deems it necessary to keep under arms nearly half a million men.

The truth of the matter is that by means of skilfully directed propaganda, on which they are spending enormous sums, the governments of the Little Entente have succeeded in lulling western Europe into a sense of false security, in blinding American eyes to what is really going on in the Danube basin. By their greed and oppression Rumania and Czechoslovakia have created on the banks of the Danube two new Alsace-Lorraines. If the allies and the League of Nations continue to neglect these festering sores, then nothing is more certain than that war-fever will set in. Unless the voice of western public opinion makes itself heard before it is too late, unless the doctors at Geneva are prompt to take remedial measures Europe will have another war on its hands.

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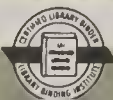

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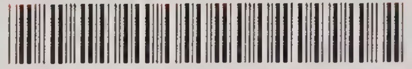
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